San Antonio Express-News

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Survivor's life forever is altered by shooting

By Vincent T. Davis
STAFF WRITER

SUTHERLAND SPRINGS — When the shooting started, Roseanne Solis dove under a pew, terrified that she was about to die as screams filled the sanctuary.

She heard someone shout, "Everybody get down!" as bullets ripped through the carpet. Shots rained through the church, where up front, near the altar, youngsters sat together and older members sat together in another group.

Solis saw people bleeding, running, trying to hide. Her left arm grew hot as blood spread down it. She didn't even realize she had been shot.

Solis

When she saw black boots from her vantage point under the pew, she had a fleeting moment of relief, thinking it was a policeman. Seconds later, realizing it was the shooter, she was holding her breath, trying to play dead. He walked toward the front and the shooting began again.

Across from her, a boy covered his eyes and screamed for his mother, without a reply. Then came silence. And the shooting began again.

"I knew if I moved I was going to die," Solis, 57, said as her husband, Joaquin Ramirez, 50, sat on a nearby stool. "I didn't want to die."

Solis survived the ambush by Devin Patrick Kelley, 26, at the First Baptist Church of Sutherland Springs, about 30 miles southeast of downtown San Antonio.

In the deadliest mass shooting in modern Texas history, Kelley killed 26 and wounded 20 others during the Sunday morning service.

Tuesday evening, in her home not far from the church, Solis sat on a sofa underneath a wooden cross, reliving the horror. On a nearby TV, law enforcement officials were giving updated information on

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Kin Man Hui / San Antonio Express-News

La Vernia High School students Chris Johnson (left) and Derrick Barnhardt (right) comfort Daniel Friesenhahn during a community memorial service at the school's football stadium in the aftermath of the shooting at First Baptist Church.

THE INVESTIGATION

Military has been lax in providing gun database info

By St. John Barned-Smith and Sig Christenson
HEARST NEWSPAPERS

The Defense Department — under scrutiny for failing to report a domestic violence conviction that might have stopped Devin Patrick Kelley from buying the guns he carried to the Sutherland Springs church shooting — had only one such case listed on a national FBI database published at the end of 2016.

Along with that single misdemeanor, an FBI report of active records on the National Instant Criminal Background Check System, or NICS, from December 2016 shows the military service branches and the Pentagon had just a handful of "adjudicated mental health" reports, one felony, and 10,958 dishonorable discharges.

The end-of-year report didn't list any records at all from the Defense Department regarding soldiers, sailors, airmen or Marines barred from

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EXPANDED COVERAGE

Kin Man Hui / San Antonio Express-News

Mourners from San Antonio are seen through a heart-shaped wreath as they pay their respects at a memorial to the victims.

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Online

Read more on reaction to the Sutherland Springs massacre and how to help at ExpressNews.com

THE GUNMAN

Story of shooter's past grows even more troubling

By Kelsey Bradshaw, Guillermo Contreras and Caleb Downs
STAFF WRITERS

More unsettling details emerged Tuesday about Devin Patrick Kelley's deeply troubled past, including an escape from a mental health facility, plotting to kill military superiors, several sexual assault accusations and a threat on Facebook to shoot a woman who defended her cousin's denunciation of President Donald Trump.

On Sunday, Kelley, 26, walked into the First Baptist Church in Sutherland Springs, a small town just southeast of San Antonio, and shot 46 people with a rifle, killing 26.

Of the 20 people wounded in the

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Devin Patrick Kelley had escaped from a mental health facility at one point.

Judges wonder if Texas officials' rights are crimped

Fifth Circuit now is weighing state's sanctuary cities law

By Jason Buch
STAFF WRITER

NEW ORLEANS — Judges for the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals here expressed concern Tuesday that the Texas "sanctuary cities" law could curtail the free speech rights of local officials.

But at least one of the judges, who heard oral arguments over provisions blocked by a lower court, suggested she didn't think the law, which creates penalties for government officials who limit the enforcement of immigration law by local police, would create an undue burden for local sheriffs and police.

Many of the arguments focused on a segment of the law that has been blocked in two prior court rulings allowing the attorney general to fine or remove from office local officials who "adopt, enforce or endorse" policies that limit police cooperation with ICE and "materially limit ... the enforcement of immigration laws."

Those challenging the law, including the city of San Antonio and the border community of El Cenizo, have said the term "materially limit" is too vague and prevents local officials from offering police officers any guidance about when to cooperate with or communicate with federal officials.

"What if we say immigration is going to be the lowest priority

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Online

More: Read past coverage of the issue at ExpressNews.com.

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TRUMP IN KOREA

North Koreans told not to underestimate U.S. **Page A6**

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